South Asian Studies
A Research Journal of South Asian Studies
Vol. 32, No. 1, January – June 2017, pp.219 – 233

Kashmir Conflict: The Nationalistic Perspective (A Pre-Partition Phenomenon)

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues with the changing narrative of Kashmir conflict in international arena, which is generally taken as an inter-state conflict between India and Pakistan. While this conflict must be viewed as an indigenous struggle for economic and social justice with its roots tracing back to 1846. This is also an effort to delink Kashmir from being merely an inter-state conflict to the conflict being a local Kashmiri struggle to preserve their identity based on distinct ethnicity. To understand the nature of conflict in true sense, Kashmir conflict is divided into two phases -pre-partition and post partition period. Many proposals are put forward by various stake holders to resolve the conflict in Kashmir, but rigidity in attitudes at both sides India and Pakistan has made the situation worse. All concerned parties are having different perspective over Kashmir as per their specific interests. Peace process dynamics are weak with least attention from United States and other major powers to resolve the issue. The paper ends with the certain recommendations to resolve the issue.
Key Words: Kashmir Issue, Inter-State Conflict, Distinct Ethnicity, Nationalistic Perspective

Introduction

The argument built in this research article aims at changing the current narrative of Kashmir conflict in the international arena. The current narrative considers Kashmir conflict as an inter-state conflict between Pakistan and India, mostly understood as merely a Hindu-Muslim conflict. Rather this research article has been focused on the indigenous factors that motivated the movement for the right of self-determination to escape various types of marginalization which Kashmiris faced under the Dogra rule and later in the “Union of India’s rule”. This research has also placed great emphasis on the sources of conflict which led to the escalation of the Kashmir conflict which the Indian federation failed to address, and on the key problems such as social injustice, economic marginalization and human rights violation, involving government sponsored terrorism among other factors.

The three basic objectives of research include, the identification of the fact that Kashmir conflict was firstly an indigenous struggle for sovereignty which did

not emerge only as a result of incomplete process of British partition of the sub-continent but which had its roots in history as far back as 1836 when Kashmir was joined by the East India Company with "Ladakh and Jammu" as a reward to "Jammu Raja Ghulab Singh" for a small amount of money in the "Treaty of Amritsar".

Secondly, this research will be an attempt to delink Kashmir from being merely an inter-state conflict between India and Pakistan to the conflict being a local Kashmiri struggle to preserve their identity based on their distinct ethnicity. Thirdly, the research is aimed to change the generally accepted narrative that Kashmiri movement had not been an indigenous struggle for freedom by the Kashmiri people but rather a foreign-state sponsored terror organization only. Furthermore, the research intends to bridge the gap in current knowledge which identifies the Kashmir conflict as one that surfaced owing to the "incomplete 1947 partition of the sub-continent only". It aims to present the Kashmir conflict as a nationalistic conflict with roots in ethno-nationalism that had been present prior to partition.

The research study is qualitative based on content analysis. The interpretive and analytical approaches have been employed for data analysis. The foundation of this research is composed of the theories of primordialism, nationalism, ethnicity and ethno-symbolism.

Understanding of Kashmir Issue through the concept of Nationalism and National Identity

In the modern world, the two political realities that constitute world politics includes: unyielding political geography of countries and second is the continuous social turbulence caused by social groups in order to attain independence and the right of self-determination through any successful means including segregation, violence or protests that could secure the goals of that particular social group. Study of nationalism as a political occurrence is not only relevant to on-going conflicts between states but also essential in understanding conflicts from past.

Nationalism is a political concept which exists in various forms and open to various interpretations. Kellas in his analysis has identified what might nationalism cause. Firstly, nationalism may become a reason of conflict. Secondly, nationalism may become cause of antagonism to the present state system. Thirdly, nationalism may provoke hostility towards supranational or international institutions. Nationalism may become a "determinant of a state's power in international affairs" (Kellas, 1998).

Nevertheless, Smith came up with an explicit approach which believes that Nationalism is primarily employed in the complete process of formation as well as the maintenance of a nation. Secondly, nationalism is used to build a conscious sense of belonging to a certain nation. Thirdly, nationalism is used to strengthen development symbolism or language of a certain nation. Fourthly, nationalism is prompted to put forward an ideology of a nation which includes cultural doctrine

of a specific nation. Lastly, nationalism is infused to provide momentum to socio-political movement to attain aims of the nation and apprehend the will of the nation.

However, it is important to emphasize that nationalism can be an ideology or a way of behavior and it can be both simultaneously also. In multi-national states this feature becomes extremely important because nation and state is no more the same save for the fact that majority population forms the "ethnic core" of that specific state (Cormier, 2003).

In case of Kashmir, Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir and Hindus primarily from Ladakh segregate from one another. This is very like Kellas' analysis to Northern Ireland where Protestants and Catholics adhere to strict segregation from one another. This predicament is typically a defensive reaction which reflects the ethnocentric facet of the many nationalist movements. Ethnocentrism, therefore, can be defined as the "tendency to see one's own group, culture or nation in positive terms and, conversely, other groups in negative terms" (Evans & Newnham, 1998).

As per this concept, when nationalism is communicated to one ethnic group such as in the Protestants of the Northern Ireland as a feature of their rearing and upbringing, they will conceive that nationalistic ideology inherent to their identity and not history only. Thus, nationalism will not remain as the nationalism of the population rather it will become an appropriated type of nationalism such as the Protestant nationalism, German nationalism, and Chechen nationalism (Communication Theories of Nationalism, 2001).

Smith defines national identity as a separate concept from nationalism and it is rather an incomplete process which is present within the configuration of a nation. "National identity may be defined as the maintenance and continuous reproduction of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations, and the identifications of individuals with that particular heritage and those values, symbols, memories, myth and traditions" (Smith, 2001).

A very relevant case study to Kashmir is that of Northern Ireland which when analyzed deduction was made that religion was not the significant triggering factor for the movement for self-determination. However, both factors of culture and religion have become exceedingly politicized as well as have become controversial that every conflict concerning to these factors are explained as per the conditions to avoid any prejudices. Kaplan has described territory as part of the spatial identity of a group which is essential to their national identity (Kaplan & Herb, 1999).

Primordialistic approach to study ethnic factor

Primordialism is the approach that nationalism is a derivative from the early, 'primordial' that is it has fundamental roots as well as sentiments for instance

speaking a particular language, having unique rituals as well as traditions and most importantly belonging to a specific religious group. This “naturalist” or “cultural” approach insinuates that nation, or some prior form of nations is an ancient entity: as a result, nations are not only an important but also natural element of human experience. Primordialism is most closely correlated with ethnic sentiments and thus, principally ethnic nationalism. (Majevadia, 2012).

The Primordialist approach of nationalism is well-received as it acknowledges, “the necessity for identification with the intimate and meaningful, rather than absorption into a culturally undifferentiated mass or domination by some other rival ethnic, racial, or linguistic community” (Majevadia, 2012). The other inter-related concept is ethno-symbolism that lays emphasis on the significance of myths, symbols, values and traditions in the construction as well as continuance of the modern nations.

When analyzing the conflict of the “state of Jammu and Kashmir” which existed pre as well post division of the ‘Imperial British Raj’ it is essential to understand concepts of “national identity” and what “nationalism” meant to the people of “Jammu and Kashmir” who struggled for self-determination under a monarch as well as during the subjugation of a secular and democratic governments of India for the last sixty nine years.

Kashmir Issue: Pre- Partition phase 1846-1946

The Dogra Kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir

The positioning of the once Dogra realm of “Jammu & Kashmir” is enclosed by China in the North as well as the East, Pakistan’s “Khyber Pakhtunkhwa” in the West along with the past “ Gilgit” agency adjoining Afghanistan and lastly but most importantly “Jammu & Kashmir” is bordered with two Indian states Punjab and “ Himachal Pradesh” in the South. The princely state of Jammu & Kashmir is roughly eighty-six thousand square miles out of which thirty thousand is governed by Pakistan, thirty-nine thousand by India, and seventeen thousand by China. Approximately, seventy per cent of the total population which is approximately 13.65 million citizenries is present within the Indian occupied territory (Maps and Explantions, 2000).

The regal state was fixated on the incredible and excellent “valley of Kashmir”, with a predominately "Sunni Muslim" populace, however it likewise contained areas of critical "Buddhist and Hindu" settlements. Muslims of different factions, particularly "Shia and Ismaili" were similarly inside the kingdom, alongside a couple of Sikh settlements”. With varying regional setups, Kashmir has seen Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Buddhist rulers.

After the closure of the Anglo-Sikh fighting in 1846, British imposed on the defeated Sikhs to offer the following territories: the vale of Kashmir which stretched out into the regions which included “Gilgit, Ladahk and Chamba. “Jammu and Kashmir” was then sold to “Gulab Singh” who had helped the British

in overcoming the prior Sikh leader of the state. Dogra kingdom was established that advanced into religiously also socially assorted locale in next fifty years of its presence which was solidified into one regal state which was elude red to as “Jammu and Kashmir” (Hewitt, 2001).

The “Dogra Rajput Realm of Jammu & Kashmir” was a fundamental piece of regal India, which made up adequately 66% of the British Indian Empire and comprised of roughly six hundred kingdoms governed by the British through the “principles of paramountcy". Royal India protected critical parts of South Asia from the meddlesome, reformist push of British imperialism, yet numerous sovereigns were constrained to "modernize" their political foundations by setting out upon some political change and showing readiness to accommodate social need and speculation. (Kashmir Learning from the Past N, ICG Asia Report N 70°, 2003).

Political Dynamics Prior to British Withdrawal

Transforming the princely state of “Jammu & Kashmir” into a constitutional monarchy was confounded by the degree of Muslim grievance. Dogra rule was extremely unpopular by 1933. The “Glancy Report of 1932” commanded probe into Dogra suppression of Muslim strike that took place in 1931 and aimed to strive for change inside Jammu and Kashmir and constrained “Maharaja Hari Singh” to agree to an elected assembly, known as the “Praja Sabha”. The report's perspectives and proposition were not authoritative (Kashmir Learning from the Past N, ICG Asia Report N 70°, 2003).

By 1938, a few pioneers, primarily Sheik Abdullah, rejected a restricted shared stage as counter-gainful and grasped rather a mainstream political motivation that opened their political developments to non-Muslims. In doing as such, Sheik Abdullah broke with the Muslim Conference and established his own political party, the "National Conference (NC)", in 1939 as a common power, firmly aligned with the "Indian National Congress". On the hand, Mirwaiz and those who shared similar ideology, be that as it may, such secularism implied little to Muslims and was insignificant to Kashmir's future (Kashmir Learning from the Past N, ICG Asia Report N 70°, 2003).

The “Muslim Conference and National Conference” contended in elections against each other however, both looked to put pressure on the Maharaja for more prominent change. Sheikh Abdullah required the nullification of Dogra rule and the execution of a social change system to modernize the Valley. In the wake of his 1946 tumult against the Dogras, Abdullah was captured by the “Maharaja” and detained.

Kashmir and the division of British India

To ascertain the boundaries of the two states of India and Pakistan in two provinces of Bengal and Punjab, the British established two separate boundary commissions under the leadership of Sir Cyril Radcliffe. These commissions were co-jointly called as the "Radcliffe Commission" sanctioned to demarcate the borders of the two future states of India as well as Pakistan.

The princely states rulers determined their future by becoming signatories of either of the two documents which include a 'Standstill Agreement' or an 'Instrument of Accession'. The 'Standstill Agreement' allowed princely states to continue connections with all the adjoining territories of the princely states that were under British Raj for the duration of its transition to Dominion Status in the very important areas of communications and supplies. The 'Instrument of Accession' was essentially the transference of sovereignty from the rulers of the princely states to the states of India or Pakistan. The state of Jammu & Kashmir due to geographical placement signed 'Standstill Agreements' simultaneously with India as well as Pakistan on August 12th, 1947. However, the Dogra prince of Jammu & Kashmir evaded from signing either with India or Pakistan the "Instrument of Accession" (Birdwood, 1956).

By early October, the Dogra ruler blamed the Pakistani powers for withholding crucial supplies to his state (particularly oil and grain) in repudiation of the Standstill Agreement. More truly, by early October, Muslim Pashtun tribals from the region of the North West Frontier Province (now KPK) were moving to help their kindred Muslims in the Punch resistance.

After receiving the "Instrument of Accession", the Indian establishment initiated the military airlift to drive back the raiding tribal forces. The presence of Indian military in Jammu & Kashmir was met with protests by the Pakistan. The most intense fighting took around areas of "Poonch", over the "Zoji-la pass" which connected the mainland sub-continent to "Ladakh" and lastly "the municipality of Kargil" which provided access to Siachien glacier which is the enormous water resource for both states.

However, India took Jammu & Kashmir dispute to the United Nations to highlight Pakistan as an aggressive state internationally. Moreover, the newly constructed Security Council keeping in view the total chaos didn't brand any state as an aggressor and legitimated the fact that Jammu & Kashmir was a disputed territory and not an integral part of either state of Pakistan or India.

Kashmir Issue: post partition phase 1947-2016

1947-1962- Internationalization of Kashmir Conflict

Kashmir is a central and strategic region, rich in natural resources which makes it a valuable territory for both India and Pakistan. India asked for the United Nation's assistance to promote peace in the region. After the closure of war 65 per cent of

the Kashmir came under the jurisdiction of India whereas the remaining 45 per cent formed part of Pakistan. Accordingly, a borderline was established a ceasefire between the two warring states came into existence under the supervision of UN peacekeeping forces. To provide the people of Kashmir a chance to determine their future regarding which country they want to be a part, the UN recommended a proposal which advised holding a referendum in Kashmir. Since the United States had an influential role in the UN Security Council (UNSC), the US governments consequently have wielded influence on the conflict. The Truman administration 1945-53 supported the UN resolution of 1948. However, the Indian government rejected the stance of the Truman administration by stating that this resolution favors Pakistan point of view regarding Kashmir conflict (Lovass, Mastrone, Skafte, & Weiderkehr, 2014).

The Eisenhower administration 1953-1961 supported the stance of the former US administration. This administration was successful in bringing the two fighting neighbors, Pakistan and India to the dialogue table. But this dialogue process remained fruitless. During 1950s after the occupation of Tibet by China, Kashmir became extremely relevant to Chinese foreign policy as Kashmir could serve as an excellent trading route for China to Central Asia (Chakaravarty & Naqash, 2016).

1963-1970 – Kashmir Conflict turned into a Bi-lateral Dispute

During 1962 to 1963 the state of Kashmir returned to the UN Security Council at Pakistan's request which was opposed by India. Nonetheless, on Pakistan's insistence dialogue was arranged on first February 1962. The 1962 Sino-Indian war in which China took over the Aksai Chin area of Ladakh, the measures taken by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Pakistan foreign minister strengthened the relationship between Pakistan and China. The closeness between Pakistan and China was consolidated when the two neighbors decided to negotiate on the borders of the northern territories of Baltistan and Giligit which are located next to Kashmir. The two neighbors Pakistan and China signed an important accord in Peking on the 2nd of March 1963.

The Kashmir conflict heightened further in August 1965 when UN observers reported India crossed the international border into Pakistani territory at Lahore on the 6th of September 1965. However, this progression did not mean that the dispute over Kashmir was resolved but at least the second Pak-Indo War came to an end. In the wake of the war coming to an end India and Pakistan accepted USSR as the third-party mediator which led to Tashkent negotiation held in January 1966 known as Tashkent Declaration.

1970-1990 –Peak of Insurgency in the Valley

The decade of 1980s started peacefully in the valley and attracted tourists from all over the world. However, the valley witnessed a change with Sheikh Abdullah's 1977 electoral win which restrained New Delhi temporarily from controlling the affairs of Kashmir with an iron-fisted hand. 1989 marked the real beginning of the militant insurgency in Kashmir. Almost one third of the working days in 1989 were when strikes were observed all over Kashmir. The problem escalated with communal riots breaking out between Sikhs and Hindus and police remained as dormant observer during this entire ruckus. Moreover, 1989, proved to be the last tourist season for the vale of Kashmir due to increasing militancy.

1990-1999 – Ceasefire in Kashmir

The new decade did not start on any brighter note. The indigenous struggle for the right of self-determination was on-going in Kashmir but these times witnessed the lowest cooperation between the majority Kashimiri leadership and Pakistan. Militants such as a group called "Ikhwan" were supported by the Indian security forces and primarily were used for extra judicial killings of militants as well as, journalists, human right activists and other civilians. All such extrajudicial executions were expediently spurned off as "intergroup rivalries"(Oberoi, 1997).

The tension in the region became tenable when in May 1998 India conducted nuclear tests. In reciprocation Pakistan also conducted nuclear tests. Amidst all the violence and human rights violations that had taken place in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and escalating tensions in the region reached its peak in 1999. One of the most crucial event that happened in the region was in May, 1999; Pakistan armed forces movement were detected by the Indian security forces in the Kargil ridges in Kashmir which was previously unoccupied by either forces prior to this event. Consequently, India brought its forces to Kargil to reclaim the now disputed lost territory. Hence, India and Pakistan fought war at the highest landmark that is the Siachien glacier. However, with international intervention that is following the "Washington Agreement" with the US. As a result, Pakistan pulled its forces from Kargil in mid-July.

2000-2016 – Gradual Escalation from Resolution to Current Turmoil

With the turn of the new millennium did not prove to improve the plight of the Kashmiris. The persistence Kashmiris had demonstrated with political resistance to Indian right to administration in Jammu and Kashmir and the armed resistance for the past two decades to internationalize the conflict so that it was not put in 'cold storage' ensured that Indian state took steps towards improving the grievances of the Kashmiris to some extent. Consequently, "State Autonomy Committee (SAC) Report" in June 2000 proposed autonomy resolution which was then adopted in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly. The crux of the SAC Report

recommendations was primarily restitution of pre-1953 Article 370 status within the Indian Union whereby the Indian state's jurisdiction was restricted to matters involving foreign affairs, defense and communications. However, the autonomy recommendation was rejected by the Indian Cabinet in July, 2000(Anger over Kashmir decision, 2000).

The events took a turn for worse when terrorist attack on Indian Parliament on 13th December 2001 was executed for which India held Pakistan responsible which led to increased tension the region demonstrated by the fact that both countries brought massive troops along their borders.

Simultaneously, international politics rapidly changed due to the 9/11 attacks on the US soil. However, US interests in sub-continental politics after September 11, 2011 saw a shift. During the same time span India and China sought to improve their bilateral relations. Pakistan and India conducted numerous rounds of talks. However, neither war nor negotiation has brought the Kashmir issue any closer to a resolution. Nonetheless, after violence between the two states indisputably fell the 'Composite Dialogue Process' was started in the year 2004.

Despite the developments between Pakistan and India 2014 saw regressive policy especially those concerning Kashmir. In August 2014, India suspended dialogue with Pakistan on the pretext of Pakistan interfering in India's internal matters. In September 2015 ban on beef lead to protests in Indian-administered Kashmir which were brutally clamped down by the security forces (Kashmir profile - Timeline, 2016). Kashmir has been simmering prior to partition as before 1947 it was struggle against Dogras and post 1947 struggle against Indian establishment. The impact of Kashmiri youth ever since the "martyrdom" of Burhan Wani has fuelled the Kashmiri insurgency (Chakaravarty & Naqash, 2016).

Kashmir conflict: Pakistan, India and Kashmir perspective

1. Kashmir in Pakistan's perception

Strategically, Kashmir is positioned between three nuclear power states of Pakistan, China and India. It is important to highlight that Kashmir holds ideological as well as economic significance for Pakistan which makes insignificant enough to go to war with its much bigger neighbor over Kashmir. Ideologically, Pakistan's perspective on Kashmir is based upon the same principle on which Pakistan was built that is the principle of 'Two-nation Theory". Hence, Pakistan's official stance is that Kashmir is the core reason of hostility with India. Moreover, as per the official stance all other disputes are irritants which can be resolved with ease if the Kashmir conflict is attempted to be resolved (ICG Asia Reort, 2003).

Apart from ideological importance Kashmir hold great economic and geo-political importance. The strategic positioning of Kashmir if controlled completely

by a hostile neighbor can comprehensively cripple the economy and military strength. For the past six decades Kashmir has been one of the most heavily militarized zones which poses a direct danger to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, hence Jammu & Kashmir is constant offensive tactic India has at its disposal to completely jeopardize Pakistan if Kashmir was to come under complete Indian control(Kalis & Dar, 2013).

The significance of Kashmir for Pakistan as its lifeline is evident by the fact that out of six rivers that run through Pakistan three of them which include River Jhelum, Indus and Chenab originate from Kashmir while the remaining Rivers Bias, Ravi and Sutlej have their origin source in India. Pakistan being an agricultural-based economy consequently is almost entirely dependent on Kashmir for its water resources. Furthermore, Kashmir's significance is crucial for Pakistan's geo-political clout which is essential for Pakistan to survive with two openly hostile neighbors. It is strategically significant as its location is advantageous for both India as well as Pakistan in case of attacking one another which is the primary reason for Pakistan to have military presence at Kashmir border and for the same reason Indian deploys huge forces in this region other than to rule Indian held Kashmir under sham democratic governments New Delhi establish there (Kalis & Dar, 2013).

2. Kashmir: An Indian Perspective

As far Indian point of view is concerned, "Instrument of Accession" marked by Hari Singh is the main wellspring of it, a very important part of India. Its northern areas give direct passage toward the North-Western region of Pakistan and Northern Punjab. It is India's window to the 'Central Asian Republics' and on to Russia in the North, China on the East and Afghanistan on the West. As India's Northern most region, Jammu and Kashmir acts as frontier barrier to other significant territorial forces, including China as well as Pakistan. (Kalis & Dar, 2013).

In this manner, Kashmir along with these territories has an extraordinary financial as well as strategic significance for India. There are numerous zones in Kashmir that have major geo-political noteworthiness for India. One such region is the "Siachen Glacier" in the Karakoram Pass. It is the main boundary keeping Pakistani and Chinese powers from connecting in Kashmir. If Pakistan and China were permitted to connect their militaries at Siachen, India's national security over the whole Northern frontier would be incredibly undermined. That is the fundamental reason India spends tremendous assets to strengthen its presence in Siachen since 1984. The pivotal strategic significance of Kashmir which is basically a position of normal excellence lies in its being an unfathomable stretch of plain land encompassed by the high Himalayan reaches which make it a perfect supply and air base for the safeguard of India's Northern outskirts(Kalis & Dar, 2013).

3. Kashmiri perspective

Inside the state of Jammu and Kashmir the circumstance is much more perplexing given the sheer social, religious, ethnic and territorial assorted quality that describes the state. The Kashmir valley is 95% Muslim, a hefty portion of whom backing either accession to Pakistan or freedom. The minority of Kashmiri Hindu Savants who form a large portion of the population in Jammu were driven out from the valley wish to stay with India. The area of Jammu has a Hindu population's majority, wishes to stay with India since they expect that if Kashmir turns part of Pakistan, they will be denied their rights under Muslim majority rule.

In Ladah region, Budhists form majority, who wish to stay with India, however, feel segregated by New Delhi in its administration of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. "The Kashmir conflict represents a self-determination movement for Kashmiris; an irredentist movement for Pakistan and Pakistan-controlled Kashmir; and a civil insurgency for India(Wesis, 2002).

> "All Party Hurriyat Conference Azad Jammu and Kashmir" identified that since 1989 to October 15th 2012, ninety three thousand, two hundred and seventy four Kashmiris died amongst which six thousand nine hundred and sixty nine were custodial killings, one lakh seventeen thousand three hundred and forty five arrests were carried out along with destruction of one lakh five thousand eight hundred and sixty one houses. Moreover, Indian armed forces orphaned more than one lakh seven thousand three hundred and fifty-one children, widowed twenty-two thousand seven hundred and twenty- eight women and nine thousand nine hundred and twenty women have since been gang-raped. This violation shifted the sympathies of moderates also towards the attainment of freedom (Kalis & Dar, 2013).

Efforts to resolve Kashmir conflict through various proposals

The proposals that have been put forward by various stake holders to resolve the crisis in Kashmir has been not of much success primarily due to the rigidity of the stances upheld by both New Delhi as well as Pakistan. Consequently, this rigidity exhibited by both the sides has positioned the entire region as a dangerous locality as well as a plausible nuclear flashpoint (Shamim, 2011).

It has become essential that a solution is agreed upon for this intricate and protracted conflict. However, it will not be an easy journey and requisites an iron-clad political will for this dispute to be realistically approached. Moreover, the mutual trust that needs to be established between the stakeholders is a complex concept and requires focused efforts all the concerned parties with no short cuts for this target to be attained.

Major policy proposals include;

1. United Nation's Plebiscite

"United Nations Commission India and Pakistan (UNCIP)" as well as "United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)" were established to carry out the resolution in measures. However, the plebiscite could not be conducted due to non-cooperation of both states. After so many years UN resolution is still seeking its implementation, which has very less prospects in near future to be implemented in its true spirit(Chaudhry, 1996-1997).

Apart from this flaw another drawback in this resolution is that it only gives Kashmiris the options to either join India or Pakistan and not any choice with regard to seek for an independent country for themselves and this becomes the basic reason that in the current scenario of events the solution proposed by offering plebiscite became less significant. However, the current united struggle which has erupted in the wake of martyrdom of Burhan Wani has once again made the UN plebiscite more relevant.

2. United Nation's Trusteeship Option

Another proposal presented by the United Nations to lower the tensions in the sub-continent was the UN's Trusteeship Option. It is stated in the following words, "There is a proposal that to resolve the issue of Kashmir for some time the territory may be placed under control of trusteeship of United Nations and after a period of ten to fifteen years the matter may be referred to the people for the final verdict about future status of the State. This arrangement will provide a face-saving arrangement for India, and will also give Kashmiris, on both sides of Line of Control, enough time to decide their future without any pressure or compulsion from any country or group" (Shamim, 2011).

However, the first condition for this option to become workable is if India and Pakistan cooperated by withdrawing their respective troops from the state of Jammu &Kashmir. The second condition would be for India to step back from its rigid policy concerning Kashmir to which it refers as a bilateral issue with Pakistan and has blatantly as well as repetitively refused any intervention of a third party. The third condition which was crucial to implementation of this proposal was dismantlement of all armed groups working in Kashmir. Consequently, this proposal also faced immense obstacles leading to its non-implementation.

3. Independence

The concept of an "Independent Kashmir" is not at all new. In the last six decades, a strong sense of alienation has taken roots amongst the population of Kashmir which have made them more defiant and assertive due to the sham democracy they witnessed along with human rights violations, political

manipulations, rigged elections, corrupt government administration as well as centralization of power with true power being held by Delhi. However, the primary problem with independence being one of the possible solutions is the lack of unity amongst the Kashmiri leadership on this proposal based on their regional, religious or ethnic identities which make up the state of Jammu & Kashmir.

4. Four Point System by General Pervez Musharraf

This solution is coined by Gen Pervez Musharraf. The key point of this issue included the following stages. The first point in the "Four-point system" which was to work towards the resolution of the Kashmir conflict was "demilitarization" as well as "self-governance" with combined supervision means.

The second point was to initiate "free trade" with no restrictions and the reason this was suggested by General Musharaff that with economic boons visible to both sides motivation to resolve the conflict on both sides of the border will not deter. Thirdly, with the passage of time with mutual interest between India, Pakistan and the Kashmiris, either autonomy or self-governance will be given to Kashmiris on both sides of the LOC (line of control). The fourth point leading to resolution of the conflict will be complete withdrawal of troops from Kashmir on both sides of LOC. However, this withdrawal must be jointly devised so that the conflict resolution in Kashmir is conducted smoothly. It is important to emphasize that this road map was appreciated on various forums especially amongst the Kashmiris as it involved a lot of their input in determining their future.

Conclusion and reflection: findings and recommendations

It is of utmost importance to emphasize the fact that the Kashmir conflict is an extremely complex dispute with roots that go back to1836 when the British "East India Company" signed the "Treaty of Amritsar" joining the Muslim majority Kashmir valley with Ladakh and Jammu as a reward for Raja Ghulab Singh of Jammu helping the British gain this strategically important land. The Kashmir conflict as witnessed today is not only complex but also very sensitive, as populations belonging to different ethnic groups feel their existence threatened. After in-depth analysis, it is crucial to emphasize the absence of an immediate resolution of the Kashmir conflict. The current resurgence for 'azadi-freedom' in the wake of Burhan Wani's martyrdom has once again highlighted that Kashmir is ticking time-bomb.

Findings

- Particularly, in this research the application of the concept of "nation" to Kashmiris being represented by the state of Maharaja Hari Singh and, post partition, by the state of the "Union of India", highlights how states may fail adequately to represent a nation, leading to conflict accentuation, transforming

ethnic identity to ethno-nationalism.

- The important aspect that this research has found is the identification of all the actors as well as their actions which have been mostly ignored, such as the East India Company and Gulab Singh's 'Treaty of Amritsar' and the resentment it bred in the Kashmiri population, leading to the 'Quit Kashmir 1946' movement making the Kashmir dispute a pre-partition rather post partition conflict.
- In addressing the Kashmir issue where the political capital of both Pakistan and India is high, the political, economic and physical capital of the Kashmiris themselves is often completely ignored; the dispute is referred to as a bilateral India-Pakistan conflict.
- Currently, the political will to resolve Kashmir is lacking owing to the Kashmir revolt 2016; rather than understanding the ground realties of Kashmir, India blamed Pakistan, claiming that it financed terror against India.

Recommendations

1. The only practical way forward is a resumption of the composite peace talks between India and Pakistan with the inclusion of Kashmiris in these talks as demonstration of their being accepted as important stake holders of the conflict.
2. The most important aspect now in terms of the interventionist role of the international community in this conflict would be that of the United States whose role is important owing to its influence over both India and Pakistan. The U.S. could urge both states to initiate result-bearing composite talks.
3. The establishment of a jointly operated administration in which India and Pakistan include Kashmiris is something that the international community can contribute to; such an establishment can work with the current LOC being made ineffectual; this would enhance not only trade but also the movement of people which would lay the foundation for a way forward for the resolution.
4. However, these steps need political will and continued vigilance; regarding militancy, Mirwaiz Omar Farooq states: "If the government of India shows that it is serious about the dialogue, the issue of militancy could be addressed and those elements reigned in" (Schofield, 2008).

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